

REMARKS

The applicants appreciate the examiner's review of the prior art and requests reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the following remarks.

To expedite prosecution, the applicants have cancelled claims 8, 9, 14, and 31-36, and added new claims 37-62.

As a preliminary matter, the applicants wish to express their appreciation for the examiner's telephone discussion regarding the objection to the specification. To expedite prosecution, and in response to the examiner's suggestion, the applicants have cancelled claims 31-36, thus rendering this objection moot.

The office action also objects to the drawings as failing to include reference signs for elements in claim 9. Again, to expedite prosecution, the applicants cancelled claim 9, thus rendering this objection moot.

The office action rejected claims 9 and 12 as being indefinite. As noted above, claim 9 was deleted and thus, this rejection is moot. Applicants further amended the typographical error in claim 12 to define the plug member as being at least partially within the gland member.

The office action further rejected claims 1-7, 10-24, and 31-36 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,620,434 (Brony). Before discussing this rejection, however, applicants also note that the office action rejected all of the claims under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting. Again, to expedite prosecution, applicants submit a terminal disclaimer to overcome this rejection. Note that this terminal disclaimer, as well as some of the various amendments, should not be construed to be the applicants' agreement with the rejections.

To simplify this discussion with regard to Brony, applicants summarize below the amendments to the independent claims:

- Amended claim 1: Original claim 1 and original claim 8,
- Amended claim 13: Original claim 13 and original claim 8,
- New claim 37: Original claim 1 and original claim 10,
- New claim 50: Original claim 13 and original claim 10.

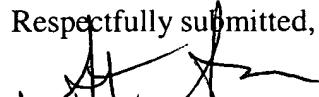
Since it essentially is original claim 8, which was indicated as being allowable, amended claim 1 also is allowable. In like manner, dependent claims 2-7, 10-12 also are allowable for the

same reasons. Moreover, because it also incorporates the limitations of claim 8, amended claim 13 and its dependent claims also are allowable for the same reasons.

New claims 37 and 50 both incorporate original claim 10. The valve of Brony figure 8, however, does not teach a substantially rigid plug member. To the contrary, column 6, lines 51-55 explicitly state that the “alternative valve 78 may be formed from a resilient material. . .” Of course, a resilient material cannot be substantially rigid. Moreover, nowhere does Brony even suggest that a resilient gland member could secure about at least a portion of a substantially rigid plug member. Accordingly, new claims 37-62 are allowable.

The application therefore is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. Applicants request that the examiner contact applicant’s attorney, Steven Saunders, if it will assist examination of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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